

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks. Claims 1-13 are allowed and claims 29-43 are pending in the case. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 2 on page 2 of the Office Action, the Office Action stated that claims 14-28 have been renumbered to 29-43. Applicants thank the Examiner for renumbering the claims and have presented the renumbered claims in the Listing of the Claims.


In paragraph 6 on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 29 and 31-39 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Yamazaki (JP No. 06-311338). In paragraph 8 on page 5 of the Office Action, claims 40-43 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamazaki (JP No. 06-311338). However, in paragraph 9 on page 7 of the Office Action, claim 30 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections, but in the interest of expediting prosecution have amended claim 29 to overcome the rejections by incorporating the limitations of objected claim 30 into claim 29. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 29, as amended, is patentable over the cited references.

Because claims 31-43 depend from claim 1 and include the features recited in the independent claim, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 31-43 are also patentably distinct over the cited references. Nevertheless, Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the Office Action's rejection with respect to such dependent claims and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

In view of the foregoing it is respectfully submitted that the claims in their present form are allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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